

# DYETT & BHATIA

Urban and Regional Planners

## LODI GENERAL UPDATE JOINT CITY COUNCIL & PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

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Date: Thursday, September 14, 2006. 7:00-8:45 pm.

Location: Carnegie Forum/City Council Chambers, City of Lodi

### Attendees:

#### City Council:

Susan Hitchcock, Mayor  
Bob Johnson, Mayor Pro Tempore  
John Beckman, Council Member  
Larry D. Hansen, Council Member  
JoAnne L Mounce, Council  
Member

Rajeev Bhatia  
Sarah Nurmela  
Yvonne Hung

#### ESA:

Ray Weiss  
Jessica Mitchell

#### Planning Commission:

Bill Cummins  
Randall Heinitz  
Wendall Kiser  
Doug Kuehne  
Tim Mattheis  
Gina Moran  
Dennis White

#### Mundie & Associates:

Suzanne Lampert

#### Fehr & Peers:

Julie Morgan  
Mike Wallace

#### City Staff:

Randy Hatch,  
Peter Pirnejad

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Dyett & Bhatia:

### MEETING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this meeting were to:

- Review Public Participation Program: provide direction for any adjustments
- Discuss stakeholders to be interviewed; input for community survey
- Discuss issues and priorities for the General Plan

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Various components of the outreach process were reviewed. These include a survey mailed to one in three households in Lodi, stakeholder interviews during the visioning and identifying issues stage, and citywide public workshops or open houses over two years during each of the following planning stages: Issues and Visioning, Alternative Plans,

Preferred Plan, and Draft General Plan. While Commissioners and Councilors are happy with the overall participation approach, there is a desire to have expanded mailing for the survey, and additional community workshops, with a final decision on these depending on additional costs that will result. The following summarizes the discussion.

## **Survey**

*Quantity.* There was considerable discussion on the survey methodology, and number of surveys to be mailed out. The scope of work approved for the General Plan incorporates mailing a survey to one in three households in Lodi. Based on D&B's experience, this should generate about 600-700 completed surveys, which should provide confidence in the results. Several Councilor and Commissioners would like to see surveys mailed out to all households, so that no community member feels left out.

*Methodology.* Some Council and Commission members raised the option of on-line, door-to-door, and registered voters only surveys. Conducting a mail-in survey is much more economical than a phone or door-to-door survey. The cost of a citywide (reaching out to every household) phone or door-to-door survey would be prohibitive. D&B's own experience has shown that mail surveys receive much higher response rates than web-based surveys, since they are tangible, unlike electronic versions that are easily forgotten if a computer is not available. They are also fairly economic and efficient to conduct. Likewise, phone and door-to-door surveys raise survey costs by a lot while reaching out to fewer people, although from a statistical purpose they would be slightly more robust, as they would avoid the self-selection bias that happens with mail surveys. Furthermore, mail surveys do not single out any segments of the population (in other words, those who do not have computers or are not tech savvy, or non-registered votes). There was consensus to stick with the mail-in survey.

*Survey questions.* In the discussion for the content of the survey, the desired information to be obtained include what kind of development and preservation programs are residents envisioning, as well as their level of support. Some possible topics/questions to be inserted in the survey include the following:

- Funding priorities. Are residents willing to pay for the changes they are supporting? Are they willing to pay sales tax, parcel tax, or user fees? What is the commitment level?
- Anything that will affect the General Fund
- Greenbelt and potential urban growth boundary
- Input on small neighborhood parks
- Demographic characteristics of respondents

- Historic preservation
- Hotels and bed-and-breakfasts
- Traffic
- Local wineries and using services or tasting rooms in the city of Lodi
- Tourism
- Canal, bike paths, trails
- What size does the public want the community to grow to? What population are they expecting?

## **Stakeholder Interviews**

Stakeholder meetings are planned for the Issues and Visioning stage of the planning process. These private meetings will take place in 30 to 45 minute time slots in groups of two to three stakeholders. The purpose of these working sessions is to understand what are the bottom-line issues in Lodi, and to have a candid one-on-one dialogue with major stakeholders who represent segments of the community. The interviews will be open-ended.

Stakeholders to be interviewed recommended by Council and Commission members during the meeting are:

- Council members
- Planning Commissioners
- Lodi Improvement Committee
- Historical society
- San Joaquin Partnership for Families
- Lodi Chamber of Commerce
- School districts, or superintendents
- San Joaquin Valley did governor's office forum at Hutchins square, for whole valley. (public workshops)
- Lowell Center
- Downtown Partnership
- Visitor Bureau
- Key industrial people, beyond chamber of commerce; small businesses
- Large industrial uses (sample)
- Rapid transit provider, 30 years in future, provide corridor
- Development committee
- Major employers
- Hospital; medical community
- El Concilio

## Community Workshops

Dyett & Bhatia has planned three citywide workshops—one each for the Visioning and Issues, Opportunities and Challenges, and the Preferred Plan phase, and an open house when the Draft General Plan has been done. In addition, there will be a workshop focused on livability.

*Number.* Some council and committee members expressed concern that the number of community workshops are too few to adequately capture public participation. The Mayor stated that the last General Plan had three public participation workshops just for visioning. Another city official said that four to six community workshops at community venues would be more effective.

*Methodology.* Some Councilors/Commissioners were concerned that citywide workshops would not be the best form of public outreach. Rather, smaller workshops at the neighborhood or community level would help provide a more personal and accessible venue for residents. City council and commission members voiced their desire to actively reach out to different segments of the community, holding workshops in different parts of town. Many agreed that schools were a good venue.

## CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

Fourteen decision maker meetings (City Council and/or Planning Commission) meetings over two years are planned as part of the Update. It was felt that joint Planning Commission/City Council meetings were a good idea and should be pursued/planned to the extent possible. The joint format will reduce time spent repeating information and encourage participation of the two city organizations.

## VISIONING/LODI'S STRENGTHS

The City Council and Planning Commission were asked to state what they thought were Lodi's strengths. Their responses are summarized below:

- *Great downtown area.* A number of city officials stated their pride in Lodi's downtown and the improvements that have occurred there over the past decade.
- *Old town and old neighborhoods.* The town's neighborhoods reveal Lodi's history and heritage.
- *Wine industry and tourism.* The budding industries can make Lodi the next destination, but this should be done without Lodi losing its sense of community.
- *Community Amenities.* Including Hutchins Street Square, the senior center, and all programs for education.
- *City Services.*

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- *Faith based communities.* There are many churches and other faith establishments in Lodi that provide many social services.
- *Strong sense of ownership.* Community has a strong sense of ownership, and City officials would like to see future generations have the same sense of ownership, which would require new families to take roots in Lodi.
- *Small town; close knit, clean, and safe community.* Even though the city has a population of 63,000, it does not feel that big. Rather it feels like a small town and a safe place to grow.
- *Unique identity.* Lodi residents are proud of their city, and feel distinguished from the nearby bigger cities of Stockton and Sacramento. Lodi's strength and identity comes from being an island and not being surrounded by other communities.
- *"Livable, Lovable Lodi."*
- *"Stuck on Lodi, not in it."*

### OPPORTUNITIES

The City Council and Planning Commission were asked to come up with opportunities for Lodi. The following summarizes their responses:

- Using growth as opportunity to shape city.
- Revitalize older sections of town (Also see Challenges).
- A big greenbelt to preserve Lodi from other communities, especially Stockton.
- Wine industry may be the greatest opportunity.
- Wine industry, historic preservation, greenbelt economic development.
- Bikes, circulation, pedestrian linkages, circulation and connections. Keep people walking and biking.
- Bring in the next generation and new families.
- Cutting edge ideas.
- Local economic forces and land use as tools.
- Maintaining an existing vibrant downtown, neighborhoods, and other assets.
- East side revitalization (goes hand in hand).

### MAJOR CHALLENGES

The following summarizes the challenges that the City Council and Planning Commission foresee in Lodi:

*Growth Pressures:*

- Pressure to grow within and around.
- Stockton's growth from the south and development of the greenbelt.
- Protect Lodi as an island/community with unique identity. Huge challenge because not everybody around may understand, cooperate or agree. Need community separator and greenbelt.
- The General Plan will make a different Lodi, and some people will not accept that.
- Growth: where do we grow? How? Must retain the small town feel.
- Temptation to gain revenue from growth.
- Facing anti-growth sentiment, which almost made City lose Blue Shield.
- Re-look at how we see Lodi today, yesterday, and tomorrow. Growth will make Lodi a much different place.
- Bring growth in at a good rate and provide services.
- Balance growth with agricultural preservation.

*Economic Development*

- Need to grow economy to complement community and wine industry.
- Keeping local economy alive.
- Attracting jobs.
- Identifying new locations for industries and growth. Businesses that want to move to Lodi and bring jobs here have nowhere to go (that is, sites are not available). Currently, they are morphed into the east side of Lodi. The General Plan should question the location of industries and businesses.
- Economic viability. Keep what we have but also expand level of services
- Change is inevitable. Lodi must have an economic engine to keep things going and support economy. Generate jobs and help pay for costs of services.
- Car dealers provide a huge tax base, and if left out of developments, Lodi will lose a lot of money.

*Revitalization*

- Maintaining downtown and revitalizing the east side (the two go hand in hand).
- Older sections of town are a challenge. How do you take something that has been neglected and depreciated and revitalize it over the next 20 years?

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- Redevelopment of Sacramento Street and Central Avenue as more pedestrian friendly.
- Incentives to restructure older sections of town and to encourage same mixed use.

### *Tourism*

- Defining tourism and appropriate locations. How does that play with community separator and viable so that farmers and wine/grape growers can work together? (Also see opportunity.)
- Becoming destination location with tourism, what does it look like, how do we do it and do it well?

### *Agriculture and Wine Industry*

- Blend between wine industry and growth.
- Protect farmers while accommodating growth

### *Greenbelt*

- Community separator is a challenge. How wide is it? How far do we go west, north east?

### *Housing*

- People are priced out of housing right now. Kids grow up and are not able to afford to remain in city. To stay viable as a city, Lodi needs to bring in a youthful group.
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Other communities have more housing options. For example, it has been a long time since Lodi has developed four-story apartments.
- Changing concept of housing to the general public
- Affordable housing. It will be difficult to materialize, unless through multifamily structures. Developers must have incentives to build multifamily housing units.

### *Urban form*

- How will Lodi not become part of Central Valley's urban sprawl? How does land use reflect urban form?
- Adopting real principles of new urbanism.
- Developing mixed uses, not just adjacent uses. Integrated and sustainable communities, especially new areas.
- Integrating new mixed-use areas with the greenbelt.

- Infill of existing neighborhoods
- Lodi will not stay the same way. The greenbelt, agriculture, and environment can be saved, but the center of Lodi (the interior) will change a lot.
- Lodi Lake: not accessible for public. Do not want that kind of development anymore.

## *Public Participations:*

- Participation of residents and community members

## VISION

City Council and Planning Commission members' visions emphasize preserving the small town feel and sense of community; maintaining a unique sense of identity and place; creating a vibrant place to live, eat, and shop; compact growth; job-housing balance; becoming a destination for tourism; ensuring continued economic vitality; and agricultural preservation. Some would like growth to remain low and others accept growth as inevitable. The following are the City Council and Planning Commission members' vision for Lodi in 2025:

### *Retaining a Small Town, Rural Atmosphere and Community*

- Lodi stays small community
- Lodi is a special place of the valley
- Retain rural charm
- Small town feel. Safe, livable, lovable Lodi, which is correlated with growth. So if grow too much, will not be as safe. Not every community needs to grow large
- Responsible growth that will keep small town feel. Place where it still feels like livable lovable Lodi, but matured into 21st century
- Want Lodi to be exactly like it is today, but a little bigger
- Private community. Want children and grand-children to have pride in own community and history in Lodi
- Growth in 20 years, but keep people in town, want to visit and stay in Lodi
- 1.5% growth per year
- Good housing to jobs ratio, starter homes



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- There will be a population of 90,000 in 2025. Lodi will not stay the same. The environment can be saved, but what is in the middle will change a lot. (Right now growth cap of 2%, but that still means growth, and change)
- Stockton was about size of Lodi 30 years ago. Lodi can become today's Stockton (which is something to be concerned about)
- A population of 90,000 will not be a small town. People will not know everybody
- If Lodi has population of 90,000, then it must have accomplished many things (in terms of infrastructure, etc.)
- If Lodi still has an identity with a population of 90,000, then it has accomplished a miracle
- Grow proportionally, and balance
- Balanced

### *Amenities*

- Enjoy some kind of nightlife, restaurants, entertainment venues
- Downtown is second to none. A viable, fun place to be. Many people living in downtown
- Connected
- Livable
- Walkable
- Good thing to keep all different uses mixed, and not too much of one use
- Many retail options in Lodi instead of Stockton, so Lodi will not lose tax base to Stockton
- Destinations with well thought-out communities
- In 2025, Lodi will have many senior citizens, which will place a large demand on the community. Lodi will need a community that is responsive to seniors and youth in terms of programs available. The demographics will be extreme

### *Rail Connection*

- Rail to and from the city (San Francisco and Sacramento)
- People can catch a train to go to different places from downtown

### *Compact Development*

- No sprawl, strip malls, Elk Grove-type developments, or sprawled housing.

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- Neighborhoods, not like Elk Grove
- Keep compact, dense community
- Three-story apartments; downtown maybe seven stories. Density-focused development. Encourage higher density housing

### *Job Creation*

- Jobs-housing balance

### *Agricultural Preservation*

- Preservation of agricultural land

### *Destination*

- Want to be the greatest destination in Central Valley, if not the State of California

## COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

One Lodi resident voiced her preference that the survey should be sent out to all households.